

NOTES ON THE BIRDS OF LEON COUNTY, FLORIDA —  
THIRD SUPPLEMENT.

BY R. W. WILLIAMS.

IN 'The Auk' for October, 1904 (XXI, p. 449) I published a preliminary list of the birds of Leon County, Florida. This included 156 species, all then positively known to occur in the county. In April, 1906, 17 species were added bringing the total up to 173 (Auk, XXIII, p. 153). The list was still further extended by the addition of 9 species in my article of April, 1907 (Auk, XXIV, p. 158), increasing the total to 182.

During the seven years since the publication of the last article, 10 species have been added to the list. These are Horned Grebe (*Colymbus auritus*), Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*), Bonaparte's Gull (*Larus philadelphia*), Buffle-head Duck (*Charitonetta albeola*), Pectoral Sandpiper (*Pisobia maculata*), Duck Hawk (*Falco peregrinus anatum*), Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*), Purple Finch (*Carpodacus purpureus purpureus*), and Junco (*Junco hyemalis*, subspecies?)

These additions bring the list of species now known to occur in the county up to 192.

Some further observations of interest have been made upon a few of the species included in former articles. These observations, together with the data respecting the 10 additions above stated, are here recorded.

The species now added to the list are numbered serially beginning with the number following the last in the preceding article. The last number, therefore, is the total of species so far recorded in the county.

## List of Species.

183. **Colymbus auritus.** HORNED GREBE.—Probably a regular winter resident but not abundant. I identified two on December 7, 1908, in the possession of a negro who had killed them on Lake Jackson and was peddling them along with some wild ducks.

184. **Larus argentatus.** HERRING GULL.—I have never seen this species in the county and believe its occurrence to be sporadic, if not

accidental. One was seen on Lake Iamonia, in the northeastern part of the county, by Mr. Ludlow Griscom of New York City, on January 2, 1912.

185. **Larus philadelphia.** BONAPARTE'S GULL.—Two were seen on Lake Iamonia by Mr. Griscom on December 30, 1911. I have not seen the species in the county and believe its occurrence to be quite rare.

**Aix sponsa.** WOOD DUCK.—My friend Fred C. Elliot of Tallahassee found several of these ducks with their young on the Oclocknu River, the western boundary of the county during April, 1909.

186. **Clangula clangula americana.** GOLDEN-EYE DUCK.—If I have ever seen this duck in the county I did not recognize it. Yet I feel quite sure it must occur here in limited numbers during each winter. Mr. Griscom saw four in the northeastern part of the county on January 2, 1912.

187. **Charitonetta albeola.** BUFFLE-HEAD DUCK.—Probably a regular winter resident in limited numbers. On December 7, 1908, I examined a handsome male in the possession of a negro who had killed it on Lake Jackson that morning. This is the only one of this species I have positively identified as having occurred in the county.

188. **Pisobia maculata.** PECTORAL SANDPIPER.—On November 22, 1910, Fred Elliot and I were hunting snipe on the marshes of Lake Jackson, 9 miles north of Tallahassee and adjacent to the old Cotton Plantation, when he discovered a snipe-like bird in a flock of killdeers. After some maneuvering he succeeded in shooting the bird. He turned it over to me and I found that it was a Pectoral Sandpiper, the first known to have been taken in the county. Strangely enough, the following year, November 12, 1911, he shot another specimen while we were hunting in the identical locality. These two birds were feeding with killdeers and seemed to be an integral part of the flock, moving from place to place in perfect harmony with their hosts. No others were seen. It is probable that a few individuals of this species regularly occur in the county during the migrations.

189. **Falco peregrinus anatum.** DUCK HAWK.—Late in the evening of December 5, 1911, while hunting snipe on Lake Jackson, 9 miles north of Tallahassee, I saw one of these birds swoop down, on contracted wings, upon a flock of Killdeers which were feeding along the edge of a small pool. Apparently the Hawk had no intention of capturing one of the killdeers, for when within a few feet of the flock it suddenly changed its course and shot upward almost as swiftly as it had descended, and disappeared in the gathering darkness. This, however, may have been due to the sudden discovery of our proximity. The whir of the bird's wings as it descended first attracted my attention. The killdeers were sensibly perturbed for a few moments, as they emitted a series of notes indicative of alarm. This is the only one of these birds I have positively identified in the county. Another is recorded by Mr. Griscom as having been seen by him on December 25, 1911, on the Horse-shoe Plantation, the extensive winter estate of his family in the northern section of the county, and formerly the property of the writer's grandfather, (*Bird-Lore*, XIV, p. 33). Mr. Griscom also states in a letter to me that he has seen one or two several

times in the vicinity of Lake Iamonia. There is little doubt but that the species is represented in the county by a few individuals each winter, but their caution is such that they successfully avoid the presence of man.

190. **Asio flammeus.** SHORT-EARED OWL.— I have not seen this bird in the county. Mr. Griscom states in a letter to me that he has seen 6 during his visits of several winters to the Horse-shoe Plantation, 16 miles north of Tallahassee. It is not surprising that this bird should have been seen so seldom in the county as it is an inhabitant of marshes, well covered with long grass and weeds and is not easily flushed.

**Antrostomus carolinensis.** CHUCK-WILLS-WIDOW.— Although a common summer resident, this bird is rarely met with in the county during the winter months. My friend Fred Elliot and I were returning from a hunt on Lake Jackson, late in the evening of December 5, 1911, and as we entered a lugubrious stretch of woodland along the plantation road, a Chuck-wills-widow spookishly appeared and settled down on the ground immediately in front of the horses we were driving. It remained hardly longer than an instant when it coquettishly flitted a few feet further ahead and settled down again. This performance was repeated 8 or 10 times, in fact, until we emerged from the woods. The bird was in jeopardy of the horses' hoofs several times, but it evidently knew the strategic moment to move.

**Antrostomus vociferus vociferus.** WHIP-POOR-WILL.— This species was included as one of the birds of the county in my original article largely on the basis of a set of eggs which had been taken in the county and which I identified as those of the Whip-poor-will. I am no' sure that I had ever seen this bird in the county prior to November 23, 1909. Just at dusk on this date I was returning home with my father from a drive and as we were ascending McDougall's hill on the eastern edge of Tallahassee, a Whip-poor-will flew toward us and alighted on a fence post directly in line with our buggy. On the following day I was hunting with Fred Elliot on the old Cotton Plantation, 9 miles north of town, when, about noon, another Whip-poor-will flushed just to the side of our team from the pinewood brush along one of the plantation roads.

**Archilochus colubris.** RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD.— I mention this species here merely to give the earliest and latest dates it has been seen in the county. March 11 (1903) is the earliest date in my records. The latest, is October 25 (1906), when I saw one in the grounds of the state Capitol at Tallahassee.

191. **Carpodacus purpureus purpureus.** PURPLE FINCH.— To the severity of the winter of 1911-12 in the northern and eastern states may be attributed the appearance of this bird in Leon County. I had never known it to reach the county prior to this time. I first saw it on January 14, 1912, a cold, raw, dismal day, with the thermometer registering around 32°. There were about a dozen of the birds in some brush piled in our yard. Later in the day I found them feeding in the chick weed which was so abundant in the yard. One of the birds was in fairly bright red plumage;

the others were in the plumage of the females. They were quite unwary and seemed to be very much at home. The following day I saw a male in another section of the county and again saw the band of the previous day in the street near our home. From this time until March 2, when I left home for Washington I saw the birds frequently in various sections of the county and they were daily in our yard feeding in the patches of chickweed. Mr. Griscom saw ten of these birds on Christmas day, 1911, on the Horse-shoe Plantation, (*Bird-Lore*, XIV, p. 33).

***Passerculus sandwichensis savanna.*** SAVANNAH SPARROW.—My former articles indicate that this is rather an unusual bird in Leon County. Such is not the fact. It is a very common winter resident, frequenting the old corn fields in large numbers and often met with in the long, dry grass of the lake marshes.

192. ***Junco hyemalis*** subspecies? December 3, 1911, was a bright, moderate day and having business at Woodville, in the southern part of the county, my wife and I set out in our buggy for that place immediately after breakfast. The county south of Tallahassee is for the most part flat and sandy and otherwise characterized by vast areas of pines and black-jack oats with rank grasses interspersed throughout. We had reached a point about five miles from town, and in country as described, when I heard the notes, made familiar to me by my experiences in the District of Columbia, of Juncos. I was not long in locating the birds, some 12 in number, on the ground and in the trees just off the road. I was not prepared to reduce a specimen to possession, hence am unable to determine whether these birds were slate-colored or Carolina Juncos. Although frequently in this vicinity and elsewhere in the county thereafter, during that winter, I did not again meet with this species. This is the only record I have of the occurrence of Juncos in Leon County.

***Progne subis subis.*** PURPLE MARTIN.—On the twenty-sixth of January 1911, I left Washington for Milton and De Funiak Springs, Florida, to take testimony in several cases involving claims to lands in the Choctawhatchee National Forest. I stopped at Tallahassee on the twenty-eighth. On the twenty-ninth, a beautiful, spring-like day, my father, mother, sister, and I were sitting on the back porch about 11 a. m. when I heard the cheery notes of Purple Martins. I went out to the south side of our premises and saw two of the birds leisurely circling over a neighboring yard. I left that evening for Milton and remained there and at De Funiak Springs until February 6, when I returned to Tallahassee, reaching there on the seventh. During the eight days spent in west Florida I saw no signs of martins. Reaching Tallahassee I found them fairly common and apparently established there for the season. I had never before known these birds to reach the county at such an early date, although I had preserved a careful record of their arrivals for several years. I was at home in Tallahassee during the winter of 1911-12 and saw the martins for the first time on February 20, 1912. Six of these birds were flying high toward the northeast and at a rapid rate, seemingly

bent upon reaching some far away point without delay. Between this date and March 2 when I left for Washington, no others were seen.

**Vermivora celata celata.** ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER.— Observations since my article of April 1906, establish this bird as a winter resident in the county. For several winters one was constantly to be seen, or its strong, unmistakable call note heard, in our yard. Frequently there were two on the premises. The earliest record I have of its fall arrival is November 12 (1905), but it undoubtedly reaches the county regularly at an earlier date.

**Compsothlypsis americana americana.** PARULA WARBLER.— Although I have never found a nest of this bird in the county, there is no doubt but that it is a summer resident in limited numbers. Several were singing sweetly in our yard on April 22, 1911.

**Dendroica magnolia.** MAGNOLIA WARBLER.— This species is a regular fall migrant through the county, but in limited numbers. I saw a handsome male in our yard on October 8, 1911. I have no spring records but suspect it passes through the county at this season.

**Dendroica striata.** BLACK-POLL WARBLER.— I have heretofore recorded this bird as a fall migrant in the county. It also occurs in the spring migration, but the bulk of them passes over without stopping. My only spring record is of a single male seen on April 25, 1911, in a pecan tree in the rear of the First National Bank premises.

**Sitta carolinensis carolinensis.** WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH.— This is a winter resident in the county, but not common. I saw one in a pine tree at Woodville on December 3, 1911.

**Hylocichla mustelina.** WOOD THRUSH.— In my first article I recorded this bird as a rare migrant in spring. I have since learned that it also is a rare migrant in fall. On October 8, 1911, I saw one in our yard in Tallahassee. It was quite disturbed about something as was evidenced by its nervous movements and frequent notes of alarm so familiar to me in the District of Columbia where it is a common summer resident and, in the estimation of many, the sweetest songster there. On the 14th I saw another in our yard.